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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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Items 37 (a) and 105 of the
preliminary list*
STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
NECESSITY OF ADOPTING EFFECTIVE MEASURES FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WHO ARE VICTIMS OF ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES, INCLUDING ARMED CONFLICTS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-ninth year

Letter dated 26 April 1994 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit, enclosed herewith, information on the effects of the Security Council sanctions on the health situation of the population of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General assembly, under items 37 (a) and 105 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dragomir DJOKIĆ
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* A/49/50/Rev.1.

Annex

Effects of the Security Council sanctions on the health situation of the population of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

I. INTRODUCTION

Security Council resolutions 757 (1992) of 30 May 1992 and 820 (1993) of 17 April 1993 and the economic and other sanctions established by them against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia affect the entire population of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and threaten the survival of 10.5 million of its citizens and over 500,000 refugees who found shelter in its territory.

The social product in 1990 (the last year before the civil war and the commencement of the implementation of sanctions) stood at US$ 26,590 million (by the United Nations methodology), which translated into a per capita income of US$ 2,530. In 1993, it fell to US$ 12,573 million, the per capita income being US$ 1,197. The 1990 level of the social product could be achieved only in the year 2012 provided that the sanctions are lifted immediately.

The imposition of sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the field of health was contrary to the best traditions in medicine and constituted a violation of many norms of international humanitarian law. The special resolution of the World Health Organization (WHO) adopted in 1989 explicitly prohibits embargoes on medical supplies on political grounds.

The total blockade of Yugoslavia has affected most painfully and tragically the field of health. Yugoslavia has been denied the right to import medicine and medical equipment and literature, and many norms of international humanitarian law have been violated, including the fundamental right to life and health. The inhuman United Nations policy affected adversely the functioning of the health service in general and an entire people was collectively punished, particularly children and the elderly, who are in need of the best and adequate health care and protection.

II. EFFECTS

Some permanent members of the Security Council that are not signatories to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child cannot be freed from the moral and other responsibility for the increase in infant and child mortality in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, caused by the lack of humanitarian supplies. In the period from 1950 to 1990, infant mortality declined from 118.1 to 23.2 per 1,000 live births in Serbia and from 101.9 to 16.6 in Montenegro and after the imposition of sanctions increased from 21.6 in 1991 to 22.3 in 1992 and from 11.2 in 1991 to 13.2 in 1992 in Serbia and Montenegro respectively.

In addition, there is a recurrence of neonatal tetanus and poliomyelitis after they have been eradicated and the number of deaths per 100 hospitalized

patients has significantly increased. These data indicate that the United Nations sanctions have genocidal effects on the youngest generation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, regardless of their ethnic origin or religious belief.

The sanctions have had an adverse effect primarily on mortality, morbidity and the implementation of some preventive medical measures.

Mortality rate as a result of contagious diseases, excluding acquired immune deficiency syndrome, increased from 191 in 1989 to 271 in 1993, i.e. by 41.8 per cent, as well as infant mortality, caused by other contagious diseases, from 36 in 1989 to 64 in 1993. The number of deaths caused by active tuberculosis has also increased from zero in 1989 to 14 in 1993. The lack of vaccine resulted in an increase of deaths caused by morbilli from 8 in 1989 to 21 in 1993. The situation is similar with regard to venereal diseases (syphilis and gonorrhoea) which are on the increase owing to greater promiscuity and the lack of medicine.

The lack of purifiers needed for water purification, spare parts, equipment and fuels has resulted in the deterioration of the quality of drinking water so that 15,065 cases of dysentery, hepatitis and typhus have been recorded.

As a result of the drastically deteriorated diet of the population - the consumption of milk in the 1988-1992 period fell by 24 per cent, of meat by 23 per cent, vegetables by 36 per cent and fruit by 46 per cent - 15 per cent of families have serious iron deficiency, 41 per cent calcium deficiency and as many as 60 per cent magnesium deficiency, 31 per cent of families have vitamin A deficiency and as many as 85 per cent vitamin B deficiency. This directly affects newborn babies, which can be best illustrated by the situation in the maternity ward in Novi Sad where the average weight of newborn babies at birth has dropped, while particularly alarming is the average head circumference of newborn babies, which is under 35 centimetres.

After 100 weeks of sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, their short-term genocidal effects can be also illustrated by the following indicators: in 1992, the mortality rate caused by acute brain-festering diseases was 6 per cent of the total number of patients treated at clinics for infectious diseases, while in 1993 this rate was 16 per cent. The duration of bacterial diseases has been prolonged, e.g. bacterial pneumonia used to be treated in 10 to 15 days while today it is treated for several weeks with the resulting pleurisy and the development of tuberculosis of the lung, because the general conditions in hospitals have deteriorated drastically, meals in them are substandard (below 2,000 calories daily) without meat and milk, hospital pyjamas have not been renewed for two years and hygiene is at the lowest level.

Because of the negative attitude of the United Nations Sanctions Committee towards the import of space parts for diagnostic and therapy equipment and medicine (cytostatics, analgesics, antibiotics), specialists in oncology have found themselves in the worst possible situation in the history of medicine - they have to select whom to treat. So far, the sanctions have caused the premature death of over 60 per cent of patients suffering from malignant diseases, shortened the life of over 55,000 of these patients, thus committing

biological genocide on 150,000 patients in Yugoslavia, while last year alone 2,680 more patients died than in normal conditions.

The grave economic situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia caused by the United Nations sanctions has had a direct effect on the mental health of the citizens of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia who are exposed to stress as a result of the lack of medicine and food. Mortality at psychiatric clinics has been on the increase: the most illustrative example is the psychiatric hospital at Gornja Toponica where, in 1992, 147 patients died, i.e. 201 per cent more than in 1991 while, in the period between January and 18 November 1993, 209 patients died, i.e. 147 per cent more than in the whole of 1992 and 347 per cent more than in the whole of 1991.

The situation in psychiatric hospitals in Kovin, Vršac and Dobrota is the same.

The elderly in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have been affected the most by the deteriorating medical services and home-care conditions. The lack of medicine and equipment for diabetes, dialysis, cardiovascular diseases, etc. has directly caused an increase in mortality among the population over 65 years of age, so that, in the two last years alone, mortality in this age group rose from 5,828.3 (1,000,000) in 1991 to 6,571.7 in 1992, i.e. 13 per cent, while in 1993 there were over 500 suicides, mainly among the elderly. The number of suicides is increasing.

Because of the devastating effects of the United Nations sanctions, which have caused suffering, diseases and death in the population of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, threatened by biological extermination, in the name of humanity we call on the international community to lift the United Nations sanctions immediately and never to impose them on any other people in the world again.